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SUBJECT: S/GWI Project Proposal from Kingston - The Secretary's
Office of Global Women's Issues Small Grants Initiative

REF: STATE 132094

1. Kingston is pleased to submit a project proposal entitled "Women Under Threat: A Strategy for Support" from Woman Inc, a non-governmental organization that operates a shelter and help line for women who are victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault. This is for funding under The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues' Small Grants Initiative. Please find text of the proposal below.

2. The Problem: Woman Inc has maintained a shelter for abused women (and often, their children) in Kingston since 1987. It is the only such facility of its kind in Jamaica, which has a population of 2.8 million. A small office in Montego Bay offers counseling only. A separate building is badly affected by termite infestation. Roof damage from past hurricanes and the need for electrical and other infrastructural improvements make this building currently unusable. The Woman Inc shelter has often been used to provide temporary housing for foreign nationals who have been abused. In recent years it has also sheltered victims of trafficking in persons, given the lack of adequate accommodation elsewhere. The shelter can accommodate only twelve persons. Women often have to be turned away for lack of space. During the last four years, the overall cost of operations has been severely impacted by the economic situation in Jamaica. Woman Inc's limited operating budget has prevented it from considering any expansion of outreach counseling; and has thwarted plans for infrastructural improvements and expanding any of its services.

3. Background: Every year, gender-based violence takes a toll on Jamaican women and their families. Police statistics show that 197 Jamaican women were killed in domestic disputes over the past three years - at least 65 in 2009. A dramatic 82 per cent increase in murders last year in the normally quiet rural parish of Portland has been attributed by the police to an increase in domestic murders. In many cases, the children and other relatives are also attacked. In an analysis of 173 cases handled by the Crisis Center, Woman Inc determined that most victims of domestic violence were aged 21-35 years, and came from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Since most are unemployed and have no financial independence, they are much more vulnerable than middle-class women who have more options for support.

Against the backdrop of a steadily escalating murder rate (a record 1,680 in 2009), violence against women in general has increased. 163 women (almost ten per cent of the total) were murdered in 2009. Women and children are no longer spared by violent gangs bent on reprisals. Jamaica's murder rate is now the highest in the world (63 per 100,000 persons). Reported rape cases trended downward in 2009 to 673 cases; carnal abuse cases (sexual intercourse with minors), also fell to 511. However, it is estimated that three times this number of cases go unreported. The victims are shamed into silence. In some communities, rape is a rite of passage, an

act that is condoned and accepted as normal behavior. A 2009 study found that 49 per cent of girls aged 15-17 in Kingston (who, on average, first have sex at age twelve) have experienced forced or violent sex. One third reported that their first sexual encounter was forced. Rape, incest and carnal abuse, especially within the home, are "covered up." The attitude of health workers, law enforcement officers, and even neighbors and family members, is often indifferent or insensitive. As a result of this marginalization, HIV/AIDS among young women aged 15 to 24 years is more than double the number of men in the same age group. Women account for 42 per cent of AIDS cases in Jamaica.

A Domestic Violence Act was passed into law fifteen years ago. Legislation has recently been amended with the adoption of a Sexual Offences Act (inclusive of a clause to address marital rape). However, the former law is not actively enforced and the latter is yet to be tested. Woman Inc is not optimistic, based on experience, that the path to redress will be made any easier. Therefore, intervention/advocacy, combined with strengthened support for victims, will continue to play a critical role in the foreseeable future.

Violence against women in Jamaica is exacerbated by:

- * Women's lack of access to legal assistance and information regarding their rights;
- * The lack of laws that effectively prohibit violence against women and provide adequate aid or protection;
- * Failure on the part of the state to reform existing laws in a timely manner;
- * Inadequate efforts on the part of the government to promote awareness or to enforce the existing laws;
- * No "safe place" (whether a shelter or family home) for women and their children.

14. Summary of the Proposed Program: The project will include three key elements:

- * Infrastructure rehabilitation to increase the shelter capacity;
- * Research on legal cases of domestic violence and rape to be used for legal advisory workshops and influence on national policy through advocacy;
- * Public education including public forums and workshops for targeted groups.

Infrastructure rehabilitation: Engineer's assessment on the roof, which needs replacing; rewiring of the existing counselling and office building and the unused building; general infrastructural repairs, which will make a new building available to provide additional shelter.

Research: An examination and review of court records to determine the process and outcome of rape and domestic violence cases. Development of case studies and related data, including cases in the newly defined "Grievous Sexual Assault" category under the Sexual Offences Act. Results of the research will be used in public education and advocacy activities, including influencing national policy.

Public education: Forums to sensitize the Jamaican public on the need for support for vulnerable women/women in crisis. Workshops for public servants (including law enforcement and legal officers); community/social workers; journalists; volunteers. Topics: legislation and human rights, gender sensitivity (for men only).

15. Expected Outcomes and Performance Measures:

Infrastructure rehabilitation: Complete renovation and overhaul of existing facilities and provision of additional shelter accommodation. Performance measures: Improved capacity and efficiency in counselling, shelter and hotline services; number of clients served to increase.

Research: Disaggregated data will be collated on the actual application of policies through legislation, including civil and criminal procedures, and the strengths and weaknesses of the system in domestic violence/rape cases. Levels of responses to domestic violence and rape cases will be measured. Obstacles to access to justice for victims will be identified. Performance measures: Trends established in specific communities and areas of the country will assist regional justice practitioners in their work in the courts. Recommendations in general report will provide impetus for court procedures, legal reform and adjustments in policy.

Public Education: Increased sensitivity to violence against women, its causes and consequences, particularly among males and public servants. Empowerment of women through rights-based knowledge that can be practically applied. Performance measures: Wider commitment to change across Jamaica (expanded awareness outside Kingston). Increased advocacy and public service announcements by males encouraging kindness and sensitivity towards women.

16. Evaluation Methods: All methods to be used in activity locations across the island, except for the Kingston building improvements.

* Detailed record-keeping to show increase in number of clients and improved quality of service, as a result of improved infrastructure.

* Detailed report on the renovation work, once completed. Monitoring and regular checks on infrastructure to maintain facilities in good working order.

* Questionnaires targeted to different groups of players in the justice system, to be issued annually to monitor changing approaches and procedures regarding domestic violence and rape cases.

* Focus groups with court and law enforcement officials to determine changed attitudes and understanding of key issues relating to human rights of victims.

* Assessment questionnaires immediately following each workshop/training session, targeted to the specific audience addressed (not the same one overall).

* Documentation and analysis of public service announcements and media reports on gender-based violence.

17. Sustainability: Woman Inc has partnered with the Gleaner newspaper to establish a trust fund account that will generate sufficient funds to maintain Woman Inc's daily operations by 2013. This is supplemented by fund-raising events and income from corporate partners, as well as fees for services to clients.

The project will be sustainable through its expansion across the

nation. It will serve as a "best practices" model for additional locations in Jamaica and can be duplicated and a reasonable fee charged for each workshop. Project leaders will be paid as experts - providing legal advice to non-governmental and community-based organizations, and practical advice on the establishment of additional regional shelters (ideally one in each of the 14 parishes in Jamaica).

Through stronger partnerships with the public sector and within the justice system established through the project, a system of data collection in the courts can be established and research can be ongoing.

Already existing partnerships with non-governmental organizations such as Jamaica AIDS Support for Life, Women's Media Watch, and others will ensure follow-up activities in the various locations outside the capital. These partnerships will help build a "core" network of service organizations, agencies and individuals.

18. The Organization: Woman Inc is a voluntary, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, founded in 1984. Its Montego Bay office was established in 1991. It draws upon the creative energies of women from all walks of life that are dedicated to providing assistance to victims of rape, incest, domestic violence and domestic crisis. In recent years that mission has expanded to recognize emerging trends and associated social issues, such as sexual harassment at the workplace, the links between violence and HIV/AIDS, and trafficking in persons. The organization operates through various sub-committees: Facilities, Fundraising, Legal Reform, Public Relations and Public Education. The Executive Committee is elected at an Annual General Meeting. The committee establishes and monitors all policies concerning activities and operations; including fund-raising events, public education, training and campaigns. Woman Inc operates a crisis shelter for women (currently celebrating its 25th anniversary) overseen by a house mother; offers walk-in counselling (9am to 5pm); and operates a 24-hour hotline (929-2997 in Kingston, 952-9533/4 in Montego Bay).

Woman Inc began public education programs in 1989, focusing recently on several areas:

- * Domestic violence intervention for police officers and other front-line workers;
- * "Men, Let's Talk" focusing on male attitudes and behaviors and gender equality;
- * Community action project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CEDA)
- * Schools campaign (currently suspended for lack of fund), aimed at raising self-esteem at primary level (also intended for state children's homes)

The Legal Reform Committee is mandated to lobby and advocate for legislative change as it affects women in the society. Woman Inc actively participated in joint parliamentary committee deliberations on the Sexual Offences Act 2007. Legal aid services are also offered to clients who visit the Crisis Center.

In the past two years, Woman Inc has been forced to cut back the number of full-time staff due to financial constraints. It has a roster of forty trained volunteers, who work on its 24-hour hotline. Three in-house counsellors (including one investigative counsellor who does more detailed background work) are now employed on a part-time basis. However, Woman Inc employs a network of experts and back-up staff, who can be called upon to implement projects - including rapporteurs, accountants, documentation specialists, psychologists and medical doctors. An overseer would also be employed to monitor the required construction work in this

project, full-time

Woman Inc Mission Statement: WOMAN INC is committed to strengthening the position of Jamaican women through providing support services, public education and by lobbying for legislative changes.

¶9. Projected Budget: Attached and sent via separate email.

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